



Historic Denver, Inc.

2019 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

CANDIDATE'S NAME: Jamie Giellis, Mayor

- 1. Do you have a personal connection with historic preservation?**

I do, several actually. My husband and I recently completed renovation of our 1911 home in Platt Park, being careful to maintain the character of the home as we put love and care into a house that hadn't seen investment in 30+ years. We were committed to keeping the house intact, even as we had to put in extensive work to repair foundations, brick, the roof, old chimneys, etc. Thoughtfully investing in our home, in our historic Denver neighborhood, was the start. I've also been personally involved in helping to protect the character of Old S. Pearl St. via a design overlay, which has been supported by a Historic Denver grant. The work aims to keep the street a commercial, community-serving street while allowing it to evolve thoughtfully. I've always been a big believer in protecting what is authentic to a community, while allowing that community to evolve. We are the stewards of the past and the creators of Denver's future. We all have the responsibility to bridge the gap.

- 2. What is your favorite example in Denver (or in your district) where historic preservation, economic redevelopment and strategic reinvestment were successfully combined to create something new?**

Union Station. When I moved to Denver in 2006, I worked for the first 4 years in the Oxford Hotel Office Annex. I loved getting to see Union Station each day as I arrived at and left work, and was overjoyed when plans started coming together to inject new life into it. What was the center of town a hundred years ago has once again become a vibrant gathering place for people of all ages and is a mix of old and new that reflects Denver's history as well as her present. It was not easy or inexpensive, but the finished product has reinvigorated a Denver landmark, and has done so with creativity – establishing a new community gathering place that will serve us for the next 100 years.

3. **Neighborhoods across Denver are facing intense development pressure, and Denver's population is expected to increase in the decades to come. What specific ideas do you have to balance new infill with our historic built environment?**

Cities are living things, and are healthiest when they grow and evolve over time. Changes should make our neighborhoods more livable, not less. As mayor, I will require that new growth in the city respect Denver's people and its neighborhoods. Specifically, I will:

Expedite neighborhood planning. Many of our neighborhoods haven't had neighborhood plans for 20+ years. A few years ago, the City of Denver launched a neighborhood planning process, but the process isn't expected to be complete for another 15-20 years. We must expedite neighborhood planning to ensure we understand neighborhood needs NOW.

Implement design requirements citywide. I believe in protecting the fabric of historic neighborhoods, ensuring the past is alive in the present, and embracing the vitality of new construction in a way that supports it. Neighborhoods should have zoning and design support that respects their individual identity.

Ensure developers give back via on-site benefits to the community via Community Benefit Agreements. Good, managed growth means requiring more out of developers when and where they do build. I will ensure we have good standards for community development agreements in place to ensure that developers pay their fair share to add to place, not take away from it.

4. **Identify the most critical historic preservation challenge/opportunity in your district. At-Large and Mayoral candidates: you can pick anywhere in the city.**

In Denver, we are experiencing unprecedented growth and with that has come the urge to tear down or drastically compromise the integrity of historic buildings that contribute to Denver's history and culture. Currently, I believe the issues surrounding Larimer Square in downtown Denver will set a precedent for other historic building in the city if developers are allowed to tear down or significantly alter these buildings.

Denver's history matters, and architecture, design and structure is an important part of that history. The City must be good stewards of our historic properties as much as it is for new growth and development. I have spent my career as a neighborhood advocate and expert in urban communities. Strong neighborhoods value history, diversity and economic sustainability. As mayor, I will work with the historic preservation community, neighborhood leaders and developers to make sure we have clarity around preserving Denver's history.

Recently, I called for Denver City Council to pause in their passage of the Denveright plan because I am concerned the plan is too vague and gives developers free rein across the city. I also do not believe there is enough language around preservation of historic buildings within the plan itself.

5. Please finish this sentence: *"I believe historic preservation in Denver can be strengthened by...."* (Please limit your response to no more than 50 words)

Recognizing the value of our historic buildings and neighborhoods and being creative in how we find opportunities to use them, while not compromising their integrity or the integrity of the community.

Extra & Optional: We think historic preservation is most authentic as a personal and visual experience. *Show us in 1 or 2 images (no more than 2, please) what historic preservation means to you.*

